DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 433 907 PS 026 927

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TITLE	Robert Sylwester on Social Interaction and Brain Development. Windows to the Mind, Volume 1. [Videotape].
PUB DATE	1997-00-00
NOTE	0p.; For Volume 2, see PS 026 928.
AVAILABLE FROM	Zephyr Press, P.O. Box 66006-OL, Tucson, AZ 85728-6006; Tel: 800-232-2187 (Toll Free); Tel: 520-322-5090; Fax: 520-323-9402; Web site: http://www.zephyrpress.com (50-minute VHS videotape and 20-page discussion guide, $149. Volumes 1 and 2, $248. Arizona residents, add 5% sales tax. Add 10% of subtotal for shipping and handling. Canadian residents, add 22% for shipping and handling and G.S.T.).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Non-Print Media (100)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Brain; *Environmental Influences; Personality; *Resilience (Personality); Social Development; *Social Environment; Videotape Recordings; Young Children
IDENTIFIERS	*Brain Development

ABSTRACT

This videotape explores the relationship between the child's social world and cognitive development. The first part of the video examines why the social environment is important to brain development. This section looks at the amount of time a child spends in a social environment, and the anatomy of the developing brain. The second part of the video looks at what kind of social environment encourages the development of a healthy, survival-oriented brain. This section highlights two studies that assessed factors contributing to success in the face of difficulty or disruption. The first study determined factors underlying adjustment to adult resilience in response to job termination: a sense of challenge, commitment, and control. The second study determined what protective factors in childhood contribute to adult resilience: (1) early childhood factors such as infant health, active and social temperament, and reasonable intelligence; (2) curiosity and opportunity to interact with the environment; (3) family and non-family mentors who gave unconditional love; (4) meaningful responsibility in a reasonably structured environment; and (5) positive self-concept and internal locus of control. The video concludes by posing three questions for discussion: (1) How can the social organization of the school enhance development? (2) How can we best incorporate brain biology into school's sociology? and (3) What can schools do to enhance both self-concept and self-esteem? The discussion guide accompanying the video provides background and supplementary material for leading a discussion following viewing of the video. (HTH)

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